

DIVISION OF THE SUBJECT

As for the more detailed division of our third Part, after these general indications of stylistic differences common to all the arts, it is especially the one-sided Understanding that has hunted around everywhere for the most varied kinds of bases for classifying the individual arts and sorts of art. But the genuine division can only be derived from the nature of the work of art; in the whole of the genres of art the nature of art unfolds the whole of the aspects and factors inherent in its own essence. In this connection the first thing that presents itself as important is the consideration that, since artistic productions now acquire the vocation of issuing into sensuous reality, art too is now there for apprehension by the senses, so that, in consequence, the specific characterization of the senses and of their corresponding material in which the work of art is objectified must provide the grounds for the division of the individual arts. Now the senses, because they are *senses*, i.e. related to the material world, to things outside one another and inherently diverse, are themselves different; touch, smell, taste, hearing, and sight. To prove the inner necessity of this ensemble and its articulation is not our business here: it is a matter for the philosophy of nature where I have discussed it [in §§ 358 ff.]. Our problem is restricted to examining whether all these senses—or if not all, then which of them—are capable by their nature of being organs for the apprehension of works of art. In this matter we have already [in Vol. I, Introduction, pp. 38-9] excluded touch, taste, and smell. Böttiger's¹ fondling of the voluptuous parts of marble statues of female goddesses has nothing to do with the contemplation or enjoyment of art. For by the sense of touch the individual subject, as a sensuous individual, is simply related to what is sensuously individual and its weight, hardness, softness, and material resistance. The work of art, however, is not purely sensuous, but the spirit appearing in the sensuous. Neither can a work of art be tasted as such, because taste does not leave its object free and independent but deals with it in a really practical way, dissolves and consumes it. A cultivation and refinement of

¹ K. A. Böttiger, 1760-1835; amongst his voluminous writings I have been unable to identify this quotation. Hegel met him and attended a lecture of his in Dresden in 1824.

taste is only possible and requisite in respect of foods and their preparation or of the chemical qualities of objects. But the *objet d'art* should be contemplated in its independent objectivity on its own account; true, it is there for our apprehension but only in a theoretical and intellectual way, not in a practical one, and it has no relation to desire or the will. As for smell, it cannot be an organ of artistic enjoyment either, because things are only available to smell in so far as they are in process and [their aroma is] dissipated through the air and its practical influence.

Sight, on the other hand, has a purely theoretical relation to objects by means of light, this as it were non-material matter. This for its part lets objects persist freely and independently; it makes them shine and appear but, unlike air and fire, it does not consume them in practice whether unnoticeably or openly. To vision, void of desire, everything is presented which exists materially in space as something outside everything else, but which, because it remains undisturbed in its integrity, is manifest only in its shape and colour.

The other theoretical sense is hearing. Here the opposite comes into view. Instead of with shape, colour, etc., hearing has to do with sound, with the vibration of a body; here there is no process of dissolution, like that required by smell; there is merely a trembling of the object which is left uninjured thereby. This ideal movement in which simple subjectivity, as it were the soul of the body, is expressed by its sound, is apprehended by the ear just as theoretically as the eye apprehends colour or shape: and in this way the inner side of objects is made apprehensible by the inner life [of mind].

To these two senses there is added, as a third element, *ideas*, sense-perceptions, the memory and preservation of images, which enter consciousness singly by a separate act of perception, and, now subsumed under universals, are put by imagination into relation and unity with these. The result is that now on the one hand external reality itself exists as inward and spiritual, while on the other hand the spiritual assumes in our ideas the form of the external and comes into consciousness as a series of things outside and alongside one another.

This threefold mode of apprehension provides for art the familiar division into (i) the visual arts which work out their content for our sight into an objective external shape and colour,

(ii) the art of sound, i.e. music, and (iii) poetry which, as the art of speech, uses sound purely as a sign in order by its means to address our inner being, namely the contemplation, feelings, and ideas belonging to our spiritual life. Yet if we propose to go no further than this sensuous side of art as the final basis of division, we at once run into a perplexity in relation to principles in detail, since instead of being drawn from the concrete concept of the thing at issue the bases of division are drawn only from the thing's most abstract aspects. Therefore we must look around again for the mode of division which has deeper grounds, and which has already been indicated in the Introduction [pp. 82-3] as the true and systematic articulation of this Third Part. Art has no other mission but to bring before sensuous contemplation the truth as it is in the spirit, reconciled in its totality with objectivity and the sphere of sense. Now since this is to come about at this stage in the medium of the external reality of artistic productions, the totality which is the Absolute in its truth falls apart here into its different moments.

In the middle here, the really solid centre, is the presentation of the Absolute, of God himself as God in his independence, not yet developed to movement and difference, not yet proceeding to action and self-particularization, but self-enclosed in grand divine peace and tranquillity: the Ideal shaped in a way adequate to itself, remaining in its existence identical and correspondent with itself. In order to be able to appear in this infinite independence, the Absolute must be grasped as spirit, as subject, but as subject having in itself at the same time its adequate external appearance.

But as divine subject [or person], entering upon actual reality, it has confronting it an external surrounding world which must be built up, adequately to the Absolute, into an appearance harmonizing with the Absolute and penetrated by it. This surrounding world is in one aspect objectivity as such, the basis and enclosure of external nature which in itself has no spiritual absolute meaning, no subjective inner life, and therefore while it is to appear, transformed into beauty, as an enclosure for the spirit, it can express the spirit only allusively.

Contrasted with external nature there stands the subjective inner life, the human mind as the medium for the existence and appearance of the Absolute. With this subjective life there enters at once the multiplicity and variety of individuality, particularization,

difference, action, and development, in short the entire and variegated world of the reality of the spirit in which the Absolute is known, willed, felt, and activated.

It is clear already from this hint that the differences, into which the total content of art is broken up, correspond essentially, in respect of artistic apprehension and portrayal, with what we considered in Part Two under the name of the symbolic, classical, and romantic forms of art. For symbolic art does not reach the identity of content and form but only a relationship of the two and a mere indication of the inner meaning in an appearance external alike to that indication and the content which it is supposed to express. Thus it provides the fundamental type of the art which has the task of working on the objective as such, on the natural surroundings, and making them a beautiful artistic enclosure for spirit, and of picturing the inner meaning of spirit in an allusive way in this external sphere. The classical Ideal, on the other hand, corresponds to the portrayal of the Absolute as such, in its independently self-reposing external reality, while romantic art has for both its content and form the subjectivity of emotion and feeling in its infinity and its finite particularity.

On this basis of division the system of the individual arts is articulated in the following way.

First, architecture confronts us as the beginning of art, a beginning grounded in the essential nature of art itself. It is the beginning of art because, in general terms, at its start art has not found for the presentation of its spiritual content either the adequate material or the corresponding forms. Therefore it has to be content with merely *seeking* a true harmony between content and mode of presentation and with an external relation between the two. The material for this first art is the inherently non-spiritual, i.e. heavy matter, shapeable only according to the laws of gravity; its form is provided by productions of external nature bound together regularly and symmetrically to be a purely external reflection of spirit and¹ to be the totality of a work of art.

The *second* art is sculpture. For its principle and content it has spiritual individuality as the classical ideal so that the inner and spiritual element finds its expression in the bodily appearance immanent in the spirit; this appearance art has here to present in an actually existent work of art. On this account, for its material it

¹ With Hocho's first edition I retain *und*.

likewise still lays hold of heavy matter in its spatial entirety, yet without regard to its weight and natural conditions and without shaping it regularly in accordance with inorganic or organic forms; nor in respect of its visibility does it degrade it to being a mere show of an external appearance or particularize it within in an essential way. But the form, determined by the content itself, is here the real life of the spirit, the human form and its objective organism, pervaded by spirit, which has to shape into an adequate appearance the independence of the Divine in its lofty peace and tranquil greatness, untouched by the disunion and restriction of action, conflicts, and sufferings.

Thirdly we must group together into a final ensemble the arts whose mission it is to give shape to the inner side of personal life.

This final series *begins* with painting, which converts the external shape entirely into an expression of the inner life. Within the surrounding world, painting¹ does not only [as sculpture does] present the ideal self-sufficiency of the Absolute but now brings the Absolute before our vision as also inherently subjective in its spiritual existence, willing, feeling, and acting, in its operation and relation to what is other than itself, and therefore too in suffering, grief, and death, in the whole range of passions and satisfactions. Its object, therefore, is no longer God as God, as the *object* of human consciousness, but this consciousness² itself: God either in his actual life of subjectively living action and suffering, or as the spirit of the community, spirit with a sense of itself, mind in its privation, its sacrifice, or its blessedness and joy in life and activity in the midst of the existing world. As means for presenting this content painting must avail itself in general, so far as *shape* goes, of what appears externally, i.e. both of nature as such and of the human organism because that permits the spiritual to shine clearly through itself. For *material*, however, it cannot use heavy matter and its existence in the three dimensions of space, but instead must do with this material what it does with shapes [in nature], namely inwardize or spiritualize it. The first step whereby the sensuous is raised in this respect to approach the spirit consists (a) in cancelling the *real* sensuous appearance [*Erscheinung*], the

¹ In Hegel's text the subject of this sentence is not 'painting' but 'the inner life'. However, that Hegel *means* 'painting' seems clear from the fact that the first word in his following sentence is *Ihr*.

² *Bewusstseins* (the genitive) in Hotho's second edition must be a misprint.

visibility of which is transformed into the pure *shining* [*Schein*] of art, and (b) in colour, by the differences, shades, and blendings of which this transformation is effected. Therefore, for the expression of the inner soul painting draws together the trinity of spatial dimensions into a surface as the first inwardizing of the external, and presents spatial intervals and shapes by means of the sheen of colour. For painting is not concerned with making visible as such but with the visibility which is both self-particularizing and also inwardized. In sculpture and architecture the shapes are made visible by light from without. But, in painting, the material, in itself dark, has its own inner and ideal element, namely light. The material is lit up in itself and precisely on this account itself darkens the light. But the unity and mutual formation of light and darkness is colour.¹

Now *secondly* the opposite of painting in one and the same sphere is music. Its own proper element is the inner life as such, explicitly shapeless feeling which cannot manifest itself in the outer world and its reality but only through an external medium which quickly vanishes and is cancelled at the very moment of expression. Therefore music's *content* is constituted by spiritual subjectivity in its immediate subjective inherent unity, the human heart, feeling as such; its *material* is sound, while its *configuration* is counterpoint, the harmony, division, linkage, opposition, discord, and modulation of notes in accordance with their quantitative differences from one another and their artistically treated tempo.

Finally, the *third* art after painting and music is the art of speech, poetry in general, the absolute and true art of the spirit and its expression as spirit, since everything that consciousness conceives and shapes spiritually within its own inner being speech alone can adopt, express, and bring before our imagination. For this reason poetry in its content is the richest and most unrestricted of the arts. Yet what it wins in this way on the spiritual side it all the same loses again on the sensuous. That is to say, it works neither for contemplation by the *senses*, as the visual arts do, nor for purely ideal *feeling*, as music does, but on the contrary tries to present to *spiritual* imagination and contemplation the spiritual meanings which it has shaped within its own soul. For this reason the material through which it manifests itself retains for it only the value of a *means* (even if an artistically treated means) for the

¹ Another allusion to Goethe's theory of colour.

expression of spirit to spirit, and it has not the value of being a sensuous existent in which the spiritual content can find a corresponding reality. Amongst the means hitherto considered, the means here can only be sound as the sensuous material still relatively the most adequate to spirit. Yet sound does not preserve here, as it does in music, a value on its own account; if it did, then the one essential aim of art could be exhausted in its manipulation. On the contrary, sound in poetry is entirely filled with the spiritual world and the specific objects of ideas and contemplation, and it appears as the mere external designation of this content. As for poetry's mode of configuration, poetry in this matter appears as the total art because, what is only relatively the case in painting and music, it repeats in its own field the modes of presentation characteristic of the other arts.

What this means is that (i) as *epic* poetry, poetry gives to its content the form of *objectivity* though here this form does not attain an external existence, as it does in the visual arts; but still, objectivity here is a world apprehended under the form of something objective by imagination and objectively presented to inner imagination. This constitutes speech proper as speech, which is satisfied in its own content and the expression of that content in speech.

(ii) Yet conversely poetry is, all the same, subjective speech, the inner life manifesting itself as inner, i.e. *lyric* which summons music to its aid in order to penetrate more deeply into feeling and the heart.

(iii) Finally, poetry also proceeds to speech within a compact action which, when manifested objectively, then gives external shape to the inner side of this objective actual occurrence and so can be closely united with music and gestures, mimicry, dances, etc. This is *dramatic* art in which the whole man presents, by reproducing it, the work of art produced by man.

These five arts make up the inherently determinate and articulated system of what art actually is in both essence and reality. It is true that outside them there are other imperfect arts, such as gardening, dancing, etc., which however we can only mention in passing. For a philosophical treatment has to keep to differences determined by the essence of art and to develop and comprehend the true configurations appropriate to them. Nature, and the real

world in general, does not abide by these fixed delimitations but has a wider freedom to deviate from them; and in this connection we often enough hear praise given to productions of genius precisely because they have to rise above such clear distinctions. But in nature the hybrids, amphibia, transitional stages, announce not the excellence and freedom of nature but only its impotence; it cannot hold fast to the essential differences grounded in the thing itself and they are blurred by external conditions and influences. Now the same is true of art with its intermediate kinds, although these may provide much that is enjoyable, graceful, and meritorious, even if not really perfect.

If, after these introductory remarks and summaries, we propose to proceed to a more detailed consideration of the individual arts, we are at once met in another way by a perplexity. This is because, after concerning ourselves up to this point with art as such, with the ideal and the general forms into which it was developed in accordance with its essential nature, we now have to approach the concrete existence of art, and this means treading on the ground of the empirical. Here it is much the same as it is in nature: its general departments are comprehensible in their necessity, but in what actually exists for our senses single productions and their species (both in their existent shape and in the aspects they offer for our consideration) have such a wealth of variety that (*a*) the most varied ways of treating them are possible and (*b*) if we want to apply the criterion of the simple differences entailed by the philosophical Concept of nature, this Concept cannot cover the ground, and thinking in terms of that Concept seems unable to get its breath amid all this fullness of detail. Yet if we content ourselves with mere description and reflections that only skim the surface, this again does not accord with our aim of developing the subject philosophically and systematically.

Then moreover there is added to all this the difficulty that each individual art now demands for itself a philosophical treatment of its own, because with the steadily growing taste for it the range of connoisseurship has become ever richer and more extended. The fondness that dilettanti have for connoisseurship has become a fashion under the influence of philosophy,¹ in our day, ever since the time when it was proposed to hold that in art the real religion,

¹ This may be an allusion to the closing passages of Schelling's *System of Transcendental Idealism*, or to his lectures on the Philosophy of Art.

the truth, and the Absolute was to be found and that art towered above philosophy because it was not abstract but contained the Idea in the real world as well and presented it there to concrete contemplation and feeling. On the other hand it is a mark of superiority in art nowadays to equip oneself with a superfluity of the most minute details and everyone is expected to have noticed something new. Occupation with such connoisseurship is a sort of learned idleness which does not need to be all that hard. For it is in a way very agreeable to look at works of art, to adopt the thoughts and reflections which may occur in consequence, to make easily one's own the views that others have had about them, and so to become and to be a judge and connoisseur of art. Now the richer are the facts and reflections produced by the fact that everyone thinks he has discovered something original of his very own, the more now does every art—indeed every branch of it—demand a complete treatment of its own. Next, moreover, alongside this, history enters of necessity. In connection with the consideration and assessment of works of art it carries matters further and in a more scholarly way. Finally, in order to discuss the details of a branch of art a man must have seen a great deal, a very great deal, and seen it again. I have seen a considerable amount, but not all that would be necessary for treating this subject in full detail.

All these difficulties I will meet with the simple explanation that it does not fall within my aim at all to teach connoisseurship or to produce historical pedantries. On the contrary my aim is simply to explore philosophically the essential general views of the things at issue and their relation to the Idea of beauty in its realization in the sensuous field of art. In pursuit of our aim we should not be embarrassed by the multifariousness of artistic productions which has been indicated above. After all, despite this variety the guiding thread is the essence of the thing itself, the essence implied by the Concept. And even if, owing to the element of its realization, this is frequently lost in accident and chance, there are still points at which it emerges clearly all the same, and to grasp these and develop their philosophical implications is the task which philosophy has to fulfil.

AESTHETICS

LECTURES ON FINE ART

BY

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Translated by T. M. Knox

VOLUME II

OXFORD
AT THE CLARENDON PRESS

1975

Oxford University Press, Ely House, London W. 1

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ISBN 0 19 824371 5

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*Printed in Great Britain
at the University Press, Oxford
by Vivian Ridler
Printer to the University*

CONTENTS OF VOLUME TWO

PART III. THE SYSTEM OF THE INDIVIDUAL ARTS	613
INTRODUCTION	613
DIVISION OF THE SUBJECT	621
SECTION I. ARCHITECTURE	630
INTRODUCTION	630
Chapter I. INDEPENDENT OR SYMBOLIC ARCHITECTURE	635
1. Architectural Works Built for National Unification	638
2. Architectural Works wavering between Architecture and Sculpture	640
(a) Phallic Columns	641
(b) Obelisks etc.	642
(c) Egyptian Temples	644
3. Transition from Independent to Classical Architecture	648
(a) Indian and Egyptian Subterranean Buildings	648
(b) Housing for the Dead, Pyramids, etc.	650
(c) Transition to Architecture in the Service of some Purpose	654
Chapter II. CLASSICAL ARCHITECTURE	660
1. General Character of Classical Architecture	661
(a) Subservience to a Specific End	661
(b) The Building's Fitness for its Purpose	661
(c) The House as the Fundamental Type	662
2. The Particular Determinants of the Architectural Forms	663
(a) Building in Wood and Stone	663
(b) The Specific Forms of the Temple	665
(c) The Classical Temple as a Whole	674
3. The Different Styles in Classical Architecture	676
(a) Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian Orders	676
(b) The Roman Construction of Arch and Vault	680
(c) General Character of Roman Architecture	682